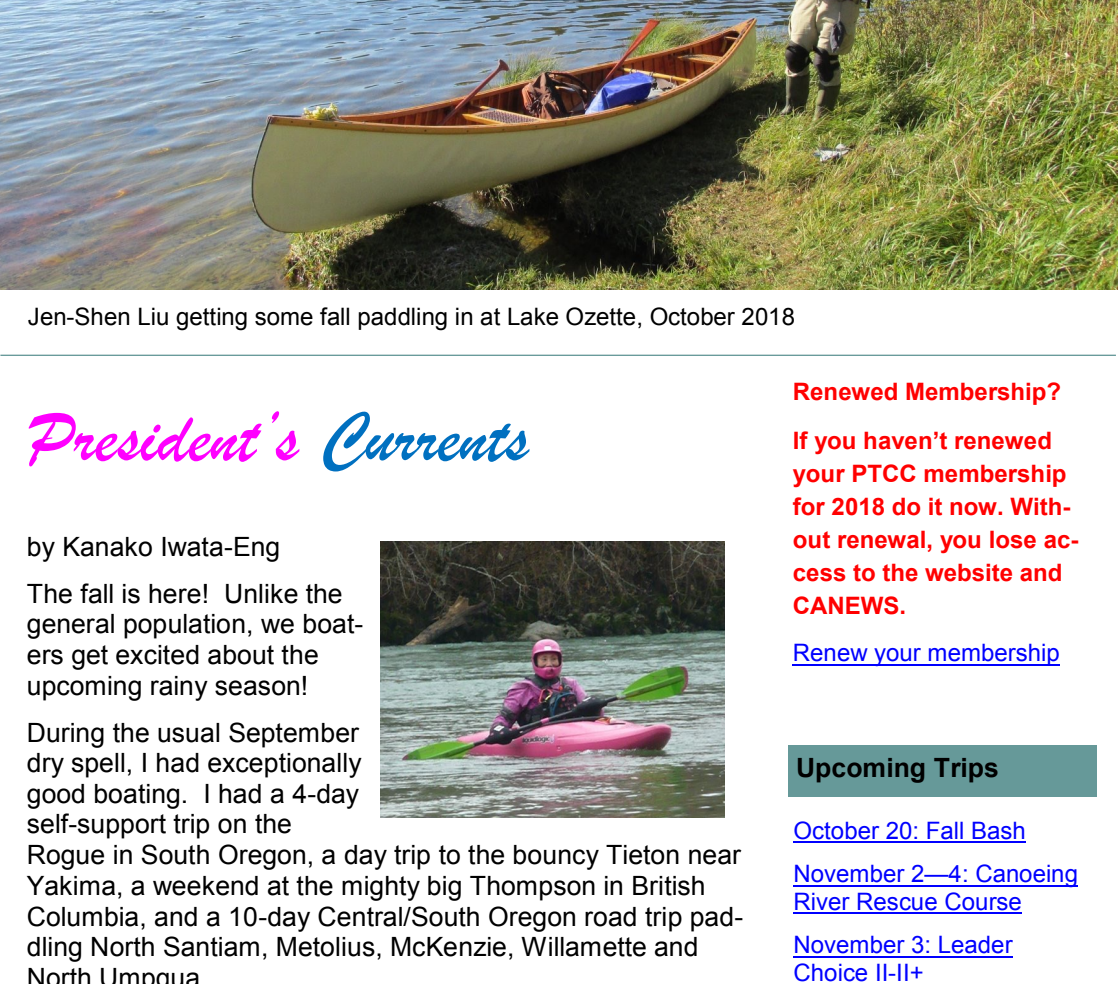


# Paddle Trails Canoe Club

## CANEWS

October 2018



Jen-Shen Liu getting some fall paddling in at Lake Ozette, October 2018

## President's Currents

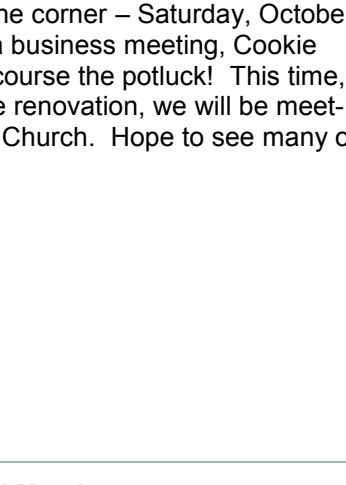
by Kanako Iwata-Eng

The fall is here! Unlike the general population, we boaters get excited about the upcoming rainy season!

During the usual September dry spell, I had exceptionally good boating. I had a 4-day self-support trip on the Rogue in South Oregon, a day trip to the bouncy Tieton near Yakima, a weekend at the mighty big Thompson in British Columbia, and a 10-day Central/South Oregon road trip paddling North Santiam, Metolius, McKenzie, Willamette and North Umpqua.

At the North Umpqua, our group boated with the Lower Columbia Canoe Club (LCCC). I had paddled with many members in the previous Methow, Klickitat and other trips, and they warmly welcomed us. On Saturday, we ran the Class 2 -3 section from the Boulder Flat to the Horseshoe Bend. There were nearly 30 boaters, and they divided us into heavy surfing and light surfing groups. I joined the heavy surfing and caught some good waves. Saturday night, we had a nice potluck. On Sunday, we ran the Class 3-4 section from the Horseshoe Bend to the Gravel Bin. This section had some steeper rapids with bigger holes. It was a beautiful day and great scenery. I truly enjoyed the river and the friendship.

Our Fall Bash is just around the corner – Saturday, October 20. As always, we will have a business meeting, Cookie Awards presentation, and of course the potluck! This time, our usual location is under the renovation, we will be meeting at the Shoreline Unitarian Church. Hope to see many of you there!



### Renewed Membership?

If you haven't renewed your PTCC membership for 2018 do it now. Without renewal, you lose access to the website and CANEWS.

[Renew your membership](#)

### Upcoming Trips

[October 20: Fall Bash](#)

[November 2–4: Canoeing River Rescue Course](#)

[November 3: Leader Choice II-II+](#)

[November 10 –11: WKC Fall Cedar Whitewater Races](#)

[November 10: Middle Fork Snoqualmie River, Middle Middle III-IV](#)

[November 22: Green River Gorge III+](#)

[November 24: Too Much Turkey II-II+](#)

Sign up for trips by clicking on the above hyperlinks or the

[Events Calendar](#)

### Website Resources

[Past CANEWS issues](#)

[Join the Club](#)

[Update your profile](#)

[Membership Directory](#)

[Club FAQs](#)

[Tech/Outfitting Guidance](#)

[Gear for sale](#)

### PTCC Fall Bash and Annual Meeting

Saturday, October 20th

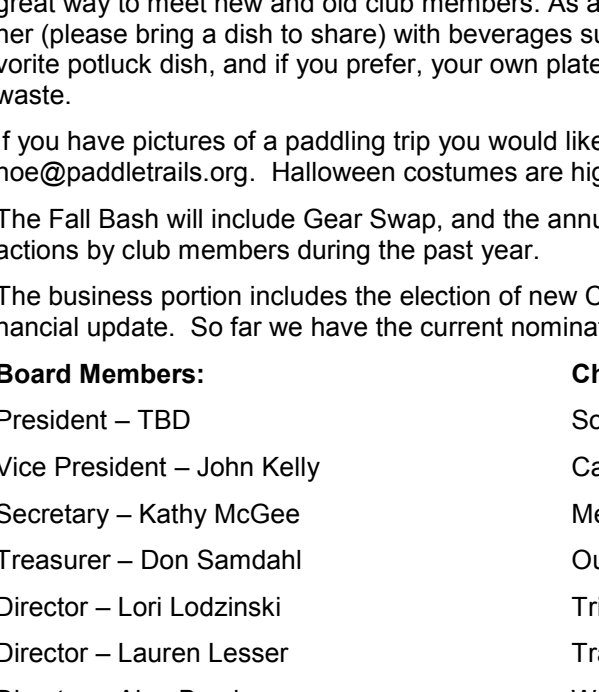
New Location! Shoreline Unitarian Church

14724 1st Ave NE, Shoreline, WA 98155

6:30-9:00 p.m.

(members are kindly requested to attend)

This is your chance to get together with all of your paddling friends and share food and stories of paddling adventures from this past year and plan for fall paddling! It's a



great way to meet new and old club members. As always, we'll have a great potluck dinner (please bring a dish to share) with beverages supplied by the club. So, bring your favorite potluck dish, and if you prefer, your own plates, glassware, and flatware to reduce waste.

If you have pictures of a paddling trip you would like to share, please let us know at canoe@paddletrails.org. Halloween costumes are highly encouraged.

The Fall Bash will include Gear Swap, and the annual PTCC Cookie Awards for notable actions by club members during the past year.

The business portion includes the election of new Club Officers, and Directors, a brief financial update. So far we have the current nominations for 2019:

#### Board Members:

President – TBD

Vice President – John Kelly

Secretary – Kathy McGee

Treasurer – Don Samdahl

Director – Lori Lodzinski

Director – Lauren Lesser

Director – Alan Brackney

Director – Bob Schneider

#### Chairpersons:

Social – Steve Reutebuch

Canews – Howard Young

Membership – Carol Beers

Outreach – TBD

Trips – Dave Mainer

Training – Lauren Lesser

Web – Dave Mainer

### Questions?

Contact Steve Reutebuch 206-525-8678 [sereutebuch@yahoo.com](mailto:sereutebuch@yahoo.com)

### Canoeing-Specific River Rescue Course

Paddle Trails offers you an opportunity to attend this canoeing-specific river rescue course certified through the Recreational Canoeing Association of BC, Canada. This unique course will be taught by master-instructor, Leonard Thor, from Vancouver. Includes 3 hour theory session on Fri evening, full days of on-the-water practice on Sat & Sun.

Dates: Fri, Nov 2 - Sun, Nov 4

Place: Shuswap River, Vernon, BC

Cost: Can\$250 plus GST - Paddle Trails will subsidize 50% for up to 4 members. You make your own payment and submit the receipt to our treasurer for 50% reimbursement after the event.

How to sign up: email to [charles@elementsadventures.com](mailto:charles@elementsadventures.com) and cc our Training Chair Lauren Lesser [laurenlesser@gmail.com](mailto:laurenlesser@gmail.com)

Kanako Iwata-Eng

### Gear

#### Review of the Silverbirch Agent 88 and More — Whitewater Canoes

One of these boats must go!

A PTCC member from Bellingham Washington reviews his latest boat, the Silverbirch Agent 88, knowing that he can only store 3 of his 4 current boats.

#### Bottom Line:

If you are a moderately taller, stocky or top-heavy paddler who is torn between the Octane 91, and narrower plastic whitewater canoes like the Option, L 'Edge or Covert, listen up! The Agent 88 is a sporty, surfy, nimble whitewater canoe that supports a unique paddler size and weight class between "standard" and "extra-large".

In the following review, I focus on the Agent 88 as a river runner. For nuances of the Agent in class IV~V creeking you would be wise to look elsewhere.

#### Background:

The Agent is new. My interest was first piqued by a prototype picture in a cboats.net post in December of 2017 under the title "Silverbirch Creeker." My Octane 91 was showing its age the previous fall, and in the meantime, I purchased a BlackFly Option, which hasn't worked for me as a full-on river runner. Through the winter and into spring, I followed the Agent prototyping and development on Facebook and the occasional industry press along the way. By the time the first boats were ready to ship, I had already taken the bait. My Agent was one of 15 boats that arrived stateside at the end of July 2018. The US importer was the same for the other Silverbirch canoes, Gnarlz Outdoors.

#### The Reviewer:

Pat Contor, age 59, 6'1", 190 lbs. PTCC/ LCCC/ WKC/ AW member from Bellingham Washington. Note that I'm tall from the waist up and being an avid backcountry skier, a bit of fiddling with the tape measure showed my "example" boat to be 107.5 inches long (8' 11.5 inches), which is clearly right in the range of most of the other short plastic whitewater boats.

Previous Canoes: Mohawk Rival, Madriver Outrage, Whitesell Descender, Millbrook Shacho, Esquif L'Edge Lite.

Current Canoes: Mohawk Viper 12, Blackfly Octane 91, Blackfly Option, Silverbirch Agent 88.

Other whitewater canoes I've paddled but not owned: Ocoee, MT Canoe FH, MT Canoe Caption, Mohawk Probe, Rodeo and Viper 11, Esquif Nitro and Detonator, Dagger Ovation.

#### Agent 88 dimensions:

For official dimensions, the Silverbirch Facebook page is likely the best source. That said, a bit of fiddling with the tape measure showed my "example" boat to be 107.5 inches long (8' 11.5 inches), which is clearly right in the range of most of the other short plastic whitewater boats.

Width however is the most important dimension in play; my Agent's outside width came in at about 29 7/8 inches and the hull profile was quite flat. By comparison, my other current boat widths are as follows; Viper 12-width 29 1/4 inches, Octane 91-width 31 inches, and Blackfly Option-width 28 1/16 inches. Of the four boats, the Octane has the flattest hull, then the Agent, closely followed by the Viper. The Option hull profile was the most domed of the four.

I haven't bothered to weigh the Agent. Silverbirch claims most of the first batch were right about 50 lbs and that seems realistic.

#### Paddling the Agent 88:

When you first sit in the Agent you immediately notice how much tumblehome the boat has and how close together the wood gunnels are, particularly at the bow. If you have any experience with the Millbrook Shacho the similarity is obvious. The Shacho-Agent comparison ends there however with the Shacho being much lighter, less stable and much faster. In terms of speed, the Agent, Option, Octane and L'Edge are about the same; slowish but not impossible.

For a taller, top heavy paddler like me, the Agent 88 / Viper 12 edge-feel and primary/ secondary stability are in the same ballpark. The Agent is less edgy than the Octane 91, but sports earlier, more positive feel of primary and secondary stability than the Option or L'Edge. Looking at the hull profile, in this case function does seem to follow form.

Agent 88 bow to stern trim seems on par with the Option, which in my experience is less fussy than the L'Edge and Shacho. That said, the Agent requires more attention to bow and stern trim than you would find with a traditional "long-boat" (Viper, Ocoee, Outrage, Whitesell) or in a massive boat like a Caption, Octane 91 or (probably) Hou Drop Zone.

#### Test Runs:

Just before the Agent arrived, I was able to paddle the Nooksack Canyon (III+) and BZ-Corner to NW park on the White Salmon (III+) in the Octane 91. Then within a couple of weeks I was able to paddle both runs again in the Agent, with the LCCC McKenzie river weekend between.

Both boats were a lot of fun. Both caught eddies, ferried, were quite dry and surfed better than me. No real surprises; again, function seemed to follow form. By comparison, I was paddling in a similar style on similar water with several LCCC paddlers in Black Fly Options; the difference was that the Agent allowed my seat height to be a full two inches higher with the Agent being a bit more stable.

Relative to an Octane 91, the Agent feels more agile and eager, much like a more stable L'Edge. The Octane 91 wears me out quicker; it's truly big and I'm at the bottom end of the recommended paddler weight range. I may flip a bit more often in the Agent than in the Octane, but not by much.

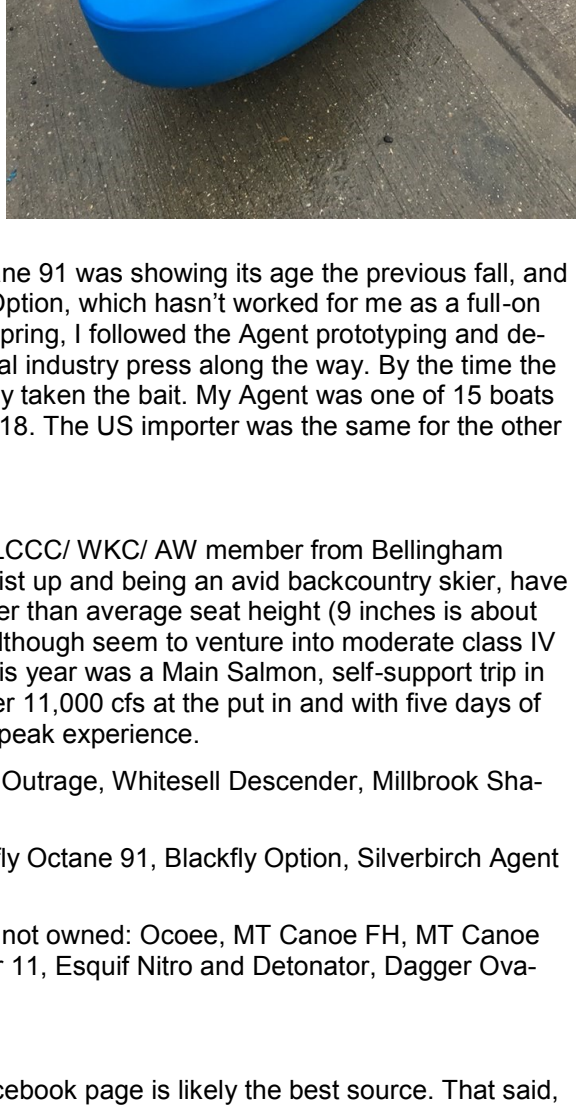
The social experience in the Agent is more positive as well. When I pull into a parking lot with the Octane on the truck, I often hear something to the effect, "What's that?", it looks like a tub—is that a new kind of kayak?" In contrast, the first thing I heard in the parking lot just before the Agent 88's maiden voyage, was, "What a beautiful canoe, is it something special?"

#### Conclusion:

So, the Agent 88 is obviously a keeper. Of the three remaining boats, the Octane 91 is a keeper for self-support and big water, the Viper 12 is a keeper based on speed alone as well as rarity and nostalgia. That leaves the Option, which is, notably, now for sale.

[Gear for sale](#)

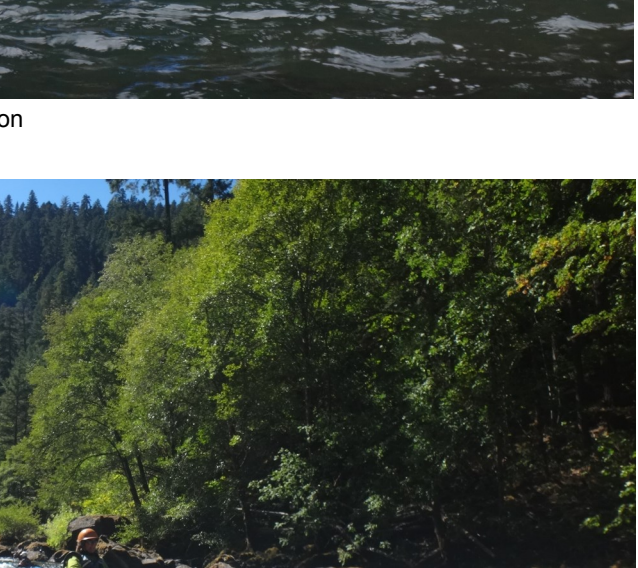
Pat Contor



### Middle Fork Snoqualmie and Pratt Comprehensive River Management Plan

Tom Matlack reminded us of the opportunity for public comment on the Comprehensive River Management Plan for the Middle Fork Snoqualmie and Pratt River.

For most of us this is one of our favorite rivers so please take some time to review the information from the Forest Service on how this plan will be developed and submit your comments. The comment period ends on November 2, 2018 and the weblink below provides information and how to submit comments. Here is the introduction from the Forest Service:



"The Forest Service is gathering input from the public, Tribes, and state and local agencies to inform a long-term management plan to protect and enhance important values of the Middle Fork Snoqualmie and Pratt Wild and Scenic Rivers on the Snoqualmie Ranger District of the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.

In December 2014, Congress designated the upper 27.4 miles of the Middle Fork Snoqualmie River and the entire Pratt River as Wild and Scenic Rivers. The National Wild and Scenic Rivers System was created by Congress in 1968 (Public Law 90-542; 16 U.S.C. 1271 et seq.) to preserve certain rivers with outstanding natural, cultural, and recreational values in a free-flowing condition for the enjoyment of present and future generations. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act requires the Forest Service to develop a Comprehensive River Management Plan for the Middle Fork Snoqualmie and Pratt Wild and Scenic Rivers and to submit a final boundary for the Wild and Scenic Rivers to Congress."

<https://tinyurl.com/MidForkSnoqualmie>

### Looking for Content for Next Months Canews

Please write up a brief (or long if you don't have time!) article for the October Canews.

What did you paddle this summer? What is the best summer trip you have ever done in all these years? Memory of your first boy scout canoe trip?

Are you a new boater? How has been your first season so far? What do you find most fun? Any difficulties you want tips for?

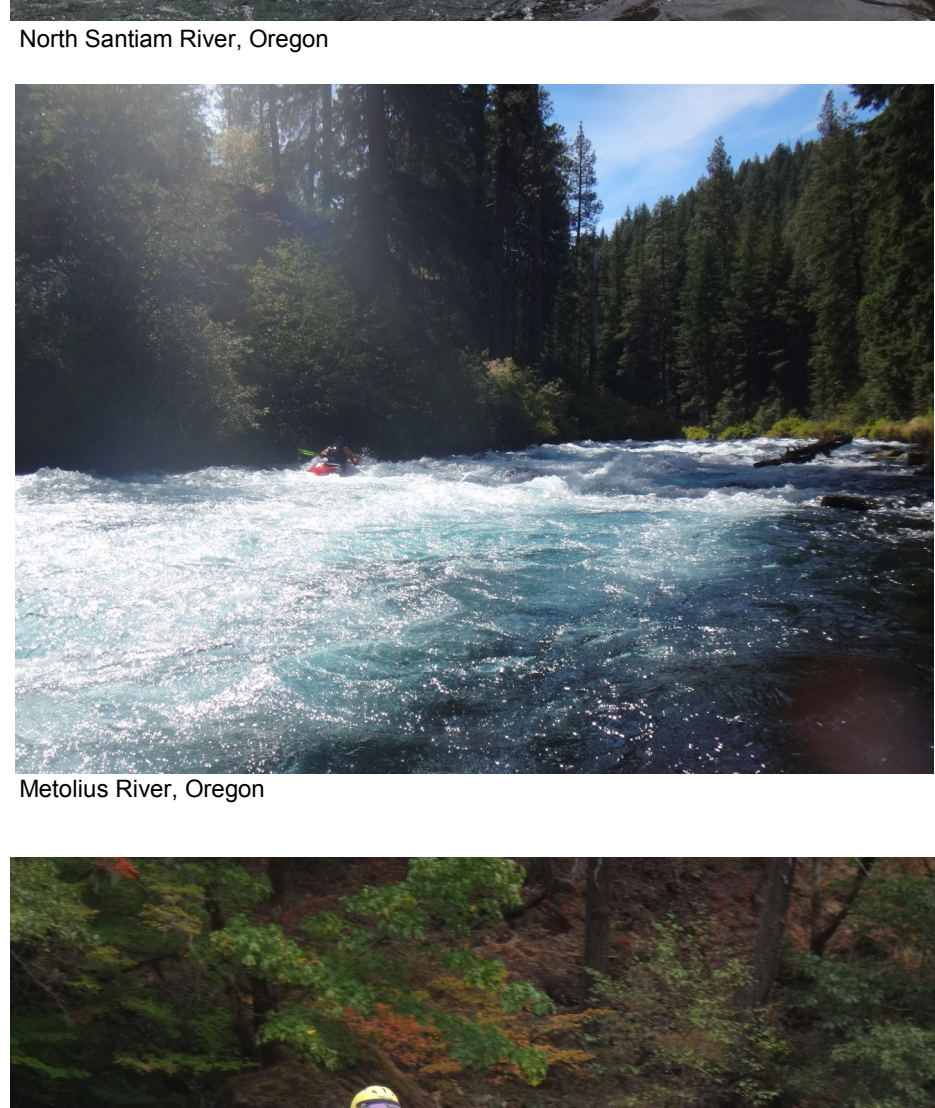
Share a camp recipe! Share technical tips!

Send your article to Editor [Howard Young](#)

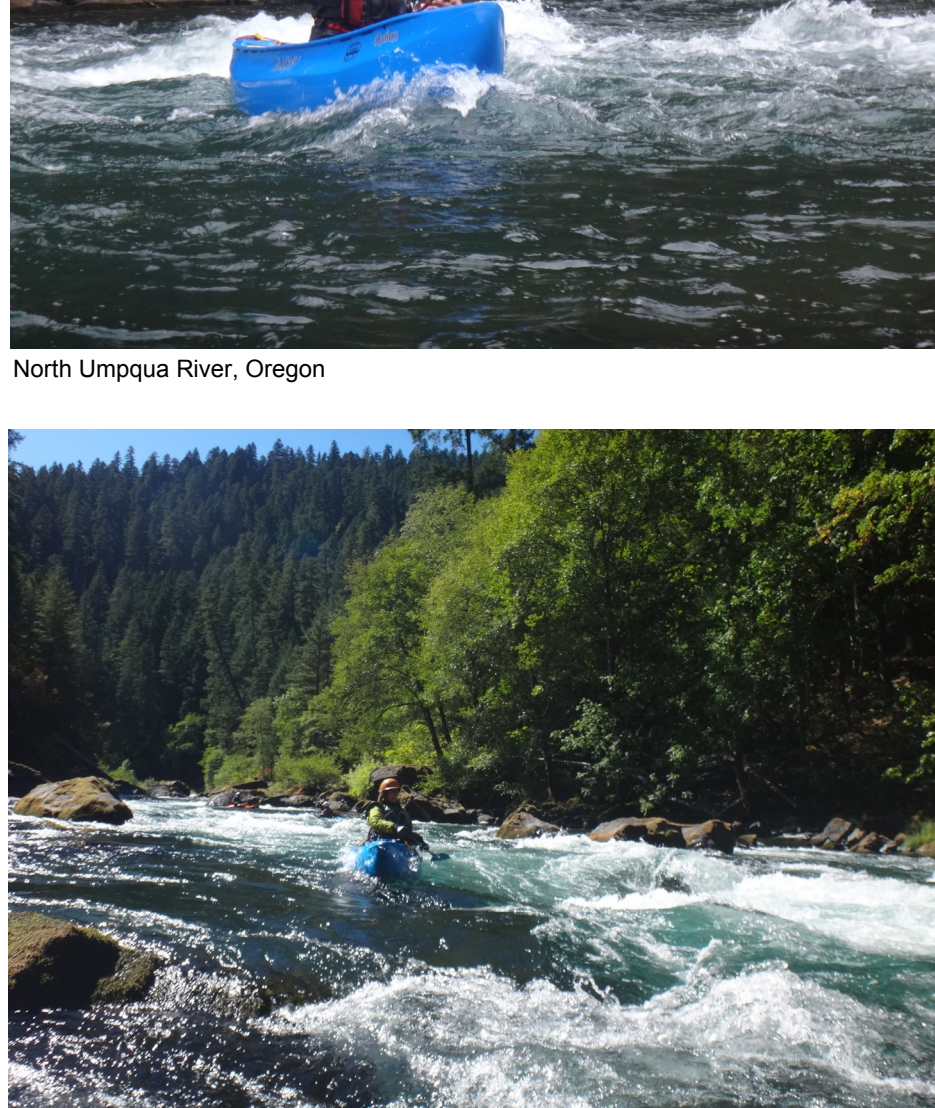
The deadline for submitting is the 30th of each month.

### Featured Trips

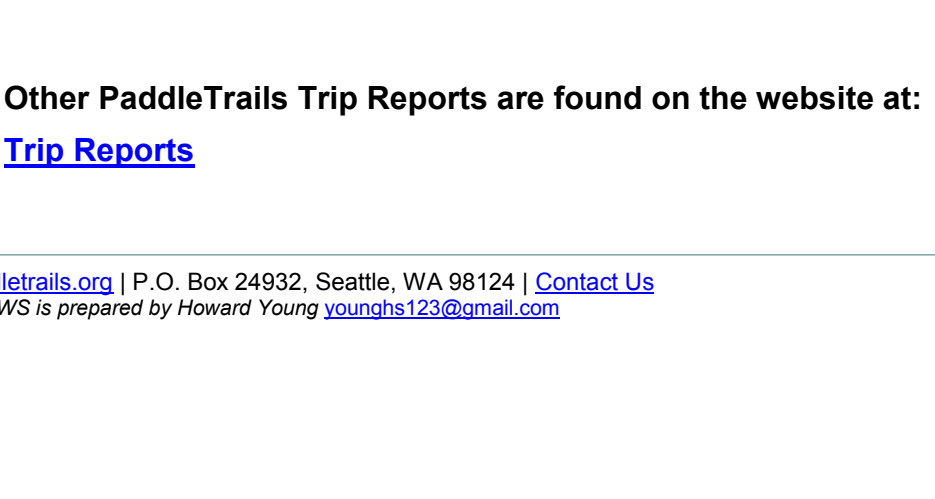
Some snapshots from Kanako's road trip to Oregon in September.



North Santiam River, Oregon



Metolius River, Oregon



North Umpqua River, Oregon



North Umpqua River, Oregon

### Other PaddleTrails Trip Reports are found on the website at:

[Trip Reports](#)

[www.paddletrails.org](http://www.paddletrails.org) | P.O. Box 24932, Seattle, WA 98124 | [Contact Us](#)

This CANEWS is prepared by Howard Young [younghs123@gmail.com](mailto:younghs123@gmail.com)